

Appendix C Grammar

Questions to consider before reading this appendix:

1. How important do you think grammar is in teaching speaking? Explain your answer.
2. What are common grammar errors in speaking? Make a list of ten common grammar errors in speaking.
3. Have you noticed that certain errors are common with beginners but other errors are more prevalent among intermediate or advanced speakers? List examples according to proficiency level.
4. Have you noticed that certain errors are common among speakers of a certain first language? List examples according to the students' first language.
5. "Grammar errors are both good and bad." What do you think this statement means?
6. Explain these grammar errors.
 - a. Why do we say "I want to go," "I need to go," and "I plan to go," but we say "he enjoys going," "she dreads going," and "I put off going"?
 - b. A student wrote, "I like that store because they sell many cheeses. I like to eat very much the cheese." Can you explain the three errors? (Note: Don't just identify the errors. Explain the corrections.)
 - c. A student, speaking about the future, said, "If I will study tonight, I will do well on the test tomorrow." Clearly, both studying and doing the test are future actions, but why can't you use future tense here? Consider the example "If you will help me, I will help you," where it is possible to use future tense with both verbs.

Appendix C Grammar

Activity 1. Interview a Student: Role of Grammar

Interview a student. Ask him or her how important grammar is in learning speaking.

Activity 2. Interview a Student: Grammar Problems

Interview a student. Ask him or her what the most difficult parts about English grammar are. Try to produce a list of at least fifteen to twenty items.

Activity 3. Grammar Questions

Explain these grammar questions.

- a. You can say "I put off my trip" and "I put my trip off." You can say "I put it off," but you cannot say "I put off it." Why?

- b. What is the difference between *economic* and *economical*?
- c. Why is this sentence wrong: “Can you tell me where does Sarah live”? The student is perplexed because he or she remembered to use the auxiliary verb *does* in the question just as you taught the class to do.
- d. Do you use the with bodies of water in English? We say “the Atlantic Ocean” but we don’t say “the Lake Michigan.”
- e. Do you use the with countries in English? We say “the United States,” but we don’t say “the France.”
- f. If I don’t have a cell phone right now but need one, I might say “I wish I had a cell phone now.” Why do I use had, which is clearly past tense, for something for right now?

Activity 4. Online Help for Grammar Questions

There are many websites that provide answers for ESL/EFL grammar questions. Find a site that you think is good. Prepare a brief report on the site, what it contains, and how this can help you and other teachers.